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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4928th meeting of the Security Council, held on 18 March 2004, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999), and 1244 (1999)", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council strongly condemns the large-scale inter-ethnic violence in Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro) that began yesterday and in which many people have been killed and hundreds injured. It also strongly condemns the attacks on the troops of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the personnel and sites of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Such violence is unacceptable and must stop immediately. Those responsible must be brought to justice. The perpetrators must understand that an attack on the international presence is an attack on the international community as a whole and that extremism has no role in Kosovo's future.

"The Security Council calls on all communities in Kosovo, taking into account their respective responsibilities, to stop all acts of violence, to avoid further escalation and restore calm. The Council urges the parties to refrain from irresponsible and inflammatory statements and accusations. The Council reiterates that the population in Kosovo must employ peaceful, democratic means and work through the recognized and legitimate channels, including the UN and the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) structures, to address their grievances. It stresses that legal investigations, in particular into the incidents involving the shooting of a Kosovo Serb teenager in Pristina and the deaths of three Kosovo Albanian children in Mitrovica, are under way by the authorities in Kosovo, and calls for thorough investigations of all other incidents.

"The Security Council deplores the reported deaths and injuries among the population of Kosovo as well as casualties among the Kosovo Police Service, UNMIK international civilian police, and KFOR troops. The Council extends its condolences to the families of all the victims.

"The Security Council reiterates the urgent need for the authorities in Kosovo to take effective steps to enforce the rule of law, ensure proper security for all ethnic communities and bring to justice all the perpetrators of criminal

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acts. The establishment of a multiethnic, tolerant, democratic society in a stable Kosovo remains the fundamental objective of the international community in implementing Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999). The Security Council will closely monitor the implementation by the parties of their obligations according to the '*Standards for Kosovo*' document.

"The Security Council expresses its full support for the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNMIK and KFOR, and welcomes that the international security presence is continuing to undertake additional measures as deemed necessary to stabilize the situation throughout Kosovo. it calls on the PISG, the authorities in Belgrade and all concerned to cooperate fully. The Council takes note of the joint statement of the Special Representative, PISG, political leaders and others of 17 March 2004."